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Hamlet travestie, with Burlesque annotati



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Hamlet Travestie,

WITH

BURLESQUE ANNOTATIONS.

By JOHN POOLE, Esq.,

AUTHOR OF "PAUL FRY," &C. &C.



NEW YORK :
REPRINTED FOR PRIVATE DISTRIBUTION.
1866.

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BRADSTREET PRESS.

HAMLET TRAVESTIE.
WITH
BURLESQUE ANNOTATIONS.

Galabin and Marchant, Printers,
Ingram-Court, London.

HAMLET TRAVESTIE:

IN THREE ACTS.

WITH

Burlesque Annotations,

AFTER THE MANNER OF

DR. JOHNSON AND GEO. STEEVENS, Esq.

AND THE

VARIOUS COMMENTATORS.

By JOHN POOLE, Esq.

Quantum mutatus ab illo.

VIRGIL.

—— Commentators each dark passage shun,
And hold their farthing candle to the sun. YOUNG.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. M. RICHARDSON, NO. 23, CORNHILL,
OPPOSITE THE ROYAL EXCHANGE.

1811.

PREFACE.

CONSCIOUS that any attempt to treat with levity the works of our IMMORTAL POET is in some danger of being received with displeasure, the following production is submitted to the public with that diffidence which the delicacy of its subject must, naturally, excite. In order, however, to remove such objections as may arise, solely out of partiality or of prejudice, a few observations may not be, altogether, unnecessary.

The objection most commonly urged against burlesques and parodies in general, is, that they

tend to bring into ridicule and contempt those authors against whose works they are directed. That this objection will hold, when applied to works of inferior merit, or to such as are deficient in sense or genius, is freely admitted; but, when used with reference to such writings as, from their intrinsic merit, have long been established in the public estimation, its futility is evident. HOMER and VIRGIL have both been the subjects of strong burlesques, but they are still read with unabated admiration; the bay that adorns *them* still flourishes, and its verdure remains undiminished: and it would be an insult to the high character of OUR POET, were it supposed that the wreath is so loosely twined around *his* brows as to be endangered by so mere a trifle as that which gives rise to these remarks. Whilst the beauties of poetry shall continue to delight, the works of

SHAKSPEARE will be read with enthusiasm; and any *serious* attempt to tarnish his fame, or to degrade him from his exalted station, must ever be considered as weak and as ridiculous in the design, as it would certainly be found unavailing and impossible in the execution.

But whatever apology or extenuation may be deemed necessary for the liberty that is taken with the poet, it is presumed that neither will be required for the freedom that is used in the treatment of his annotators: for no real admirer of SHAKSPEARE but must feel indignant at finding his sense perverted, and his meaning obscured,* by the false lights, and the fanciful and arbitrary

* The poets of the present day have wisely provided against injuries of this nature; for, with the assistance of an abundance of notes, they have so clearly explained *their own* meanings

illustrations, of *Black-letter Critics* and *Coney-catching Commentators*. And it had been well if some able satirist had exposed and punished their folly, their affectation, and their arrogance, at the time when the rage for editing, and commenting on SHAKSPEARE was at its height, and every pedant in *Black-letter lore* assumed the prerogative of an *authorised* pollutor of his text.*

From the force of its sentiments, the beauty of its imagery, and, above all, the solemnity

(which, it must be confessed, would, otherwise, be frequently unintelligible) as to supersede the labours of future critics.

* From this general reproach must the great Dr. Johnson be excepted, who, *even as a Shaksperian Commentator*, is entitled to our respect; and of whom it may truly be said, that he never wrote without the intention, and scarcely ever without the effect, of rendering mankind more wise or more virtuous.

of its conduct, there is, perhaps, no tragedy in the English language better adapted to the purposes of travesty* than "HAMLET;" and from its being so frequently before the public, so very generally read, and so continually quoted, it is, more than any other, calculated to give a travesty its full effect, and which can only be produced by a facility of contrast

*It may not be amiss to remark that, although oftentimes used indifferently, the terms *burlesque* and *travesty* are properly distinct: *burlesque* is more *general* in its application; *travesty* more *particular*: the former is levelled against blemishes and defects, which its object is to expose and ridicule, and pleases by *comparison*; the latter is constructed upon the various excellencies of any *particular* work, and derives its effect solely from the force of *contrast*. Hence a *travesty*, instead of derogating from the value or the reputation of its subject, may be considered as no inadequate test of its merit.

with its subject work. For it is obvious, that in a work of this nature (the object of which is to convey the *precise sentiments and ideas* contained in its original, but in language, and in a manner, unsuited to their subject and the character of the speaker), many parts must appear ridiculous, and even contemptible, when considered independently of the passage or passages to which they allude. For a reader, therefore, to derive entertainment from the perusal of a travesty, but more particularly to be enabled to decide whether it be ill or well executed, a familiar acquaintance with its original is indispensable.

This travesty having been originally undertaken with an idea to its representation on the stage, it will be perceived that stage-effect is sometimes considered : as in the opening of the piece amidst the magnificence of the palace, in

preference to the stillness of the platform ; and in the substitution of a pugilistic trial of skill, in the last scene, for the more elegant exercise of the rapier.

With respect to the annotations ; particular allusions are sometimes made, but, in general, nothing more is intended than an imitation of the general style, manner, and character, of the commentators ; and an attempt to produce the ludicrous by the application of the pride and affectation of critical sagacity, and the violence of controversial asperity, to subjects light, trifling, and insignificant.

With no other view, in the publication of this trifle, than to afford an hour's amusement, the author solicits for it an exemption from severe and minute criticism ; and, trusting to an indulgent and liberal reception of his work, he respectfully submits it to the public.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE former Edition of this Work having been very generally approved, I have endeavoured, by a careful revision, to render the present Edition no less deserving of the public approbation. In the subject, I have made such alterations as I conceived would tend to the general improvement of the piece ; and the numerous additions which I have made to the Annotations, will not, I hope, deprive this portion of the work of the favour with which it has hitherto been honoured.

The Annotations having been very currently attributed to one of our most esteemed dramatists, I feel it incumbent upon me, in justice to the gentleman alluded to, to declare, that I am alone responsible for all their defects

J. P.

*London,
January 8th, 1811.*

HAMLET TRAVESTIE.

IN

THREE ACTS.

Quantum mutatus ab illo.

VIRGIL.

Dramatis Personae.



CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.

HAMLET, Son to the former, and Nephew to the present
King.

POLONIUS, Lord Chamberlain.

HORATIO, Friend to Hamlet.

LAERTES, Son to Polonius.

ROSENCRANTZ,
GUILDENSTERN, } Courtiers.

OSRICK.

MARCELLUS, }
BERNARDO, } Officers.

A FRIAR.

A GRAVEDIGGER.

GHOST OF HAMLET'S FATHER.

GERTRUDE, Queen of Denmark, and Mother to Hamlet.

OPHELIA, Daughter to Polonius.

LADIES, GENTLEMEN, PLAYERS, AND ATTENDANTS.

SCENE—Elsinore.

Cast of Hamlet Travestie,

As performed at Covent Garden, London, June 17, 1813.

Hamlet . . .	MR. MATHEWS.	Ghost	MR. TAYLOR.
King	" BLANCHARD.	Ophelia	" LISTON!
Laertes . . .	" SIMMONS.	Queen	Mrs. LISTON.
Horatio . . .	" HAMMERTON.		

Cast of Hamlet Travestie,

*As performed at Mitchell's Olympic Theatre, New York, on
February 13, 1840.*

Hamlet . . .	MR. MITCHELL.*	Marcellus . .	MR. WALKER.
King	" D. ANDERSON.*	Bernardo . .	" WILLIAMS.
Polonius . .	" S. D. JOHNSON.*	Friar	" G. CLARK.
Laertes . . .	" H. RUSSELL.*	1st Gravedigger	" JACKSON.
Horatio . . .	" W. EDWIN.*	Ghost	" EVARARD.*
Osrick . . .	MISS SINGLETON.*	Ophelia . . .	Mrs. W. PENSON.*
Rosencrantz .	MR. BAKER.	Queen	" PLUMER.*
Guildestern .	" ROBERTS.		

HAMLET TRAVESTIE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Room of State in the Palace.

KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES,
GENTLEMEN, and LADIES, *discovered.*

Flourish of Trumpets and Drums.

King.

THO' by our dismal phizzes plain 'tis seen
The mem'ry of our brother's death is green ;
Yet, as he's laid in peace upon the shelf,
'Tis time we think upon our royal self :
We, therefore, to dispel our royal spleen,
Have ta'en his widow Gertrude for our Queen.—
How now, Laertes, what's the news with you ?
You told us of some suit.—

Laertes.

My Lord, that's true :
I have a mighty wish to learn to dance,
And crave your royal leave to go to France.

King.

Your suit is granted.

Laertes.

Sire, I'm much your debtor.

King.

Then brush ! the sooner you are off the better.

Exit Laertes.

(*To Hamlet*) Cheer up, my son and cousin, never mind—

Hamlet.

A little more than kin, and less than kind.

King.

Why hang the clouds still on you ? Come, have done.

Hamlet.

You're out, my Lord : I'm too much in the sun.—

Queen.

Come, Hamlet, leave off crying ; 'tis in vain,
Since crying will not bring him back again.
Besides, 'tis common : all that live must die—
So blow you nose, my dear, and do not cry.

Hamlet.

Aye, Madam, it is common.

Queen.

If it be,

Why seems there such a mighty fuss with thee ?

Hamlet.

Talk not to me of seems—when husbands die,
'Twere well if some folks seem'd the same as I.
But I have that within you can't take from me—
As for black clothes,—that's all my eye and Tommy (*a*).

King.

Cheer up, my hearty: tho' you've lost your dad,
Consider that your case is not so bad:
Your father lost a father; and 'tis certain
Death o'er your great-grandfather drew a curtain.
You've mourn'd enough: 'tis time your grief to smother;
Don't cry; you shall be king some time or other.

Queen.

Go not to Wittenberg, my love, I pray you.

Hamlet.

Mamma, I shall in all my best obey you.

King.

Well said, my lad! Cheer up! (*b*) no more foul weather:—
We'll meet anon, and all get drunk together.

[*Flourish of trumpets and drums—*
Exeunt all but Hamlet.

SONG.—HAMLET.

(Tune—"Derry Down.")

A ducat I'd give if a sure way I knew
How to thaw and resolve my stout flesh into dew!
How happy were I if no sin were self-slaughter,
For I'd then throw myself and my cares in the water!
Derry down, down, down, derry down.

How weary, how profitless, stale and how flat,
Seem to me all life's uses, its joys,—and all that:
This world is a garden unweeded; and clearly
Not worth living for—things rank and gross hold it merely.
Derry down, &c.

Two months have scarce pass'd since dad's death, and my
mother,

Like a brute as she is, has just married his brother.—

To wed such a bore !—but 'tis all too late now :

We can't make a silk purse of the ear of a sow.

Derry down, &c.

So fondly he lov'd her, I've oft heard him tell her,

“ If it rains, my dear Gertrude, pray take my umbrella :”

When too roughly the winds have beset her, he'th said,

“ My dear, take my belcher (c) to tie round your head.”

Derry down, &c.

Why, zounds ! she'd hang on him, as much as to say,

“ The longer I love you, the longer I may :”—

Yet before one could whistle, as I am a true man,

He's forgotten !—Oh, frailty, thy name sure is woman !

Derry down, &c.

To marry my uncle ! my father's own brother !—

I'm as much like a lion as one's like the other.

It will not, by jingo, it can't come to good—

But break, my poor heart :—I'd say more if I could.

Derry down, &c.

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.

Hamlet.

My lads, I'm glad to see you. I implore
You'll tell me what brought you to Elsinore.

[*To Horatio.*

Horatio.

To see dad's funeral I popp'd my head in.

Hamlet.

No quizzing (*d*)—'twas to see my mother's wedding.

Horatio.

Indeed, my lord, one follow'd hard on t'other.—
I never should have thought it of your mother.

Hamlet.

Thrift, thrift, Horatio! Denmark's cooks were able
With funeral meats to cheer (*e*) the marriage-table.—
Methinks I have my father in my sight.

Horatio.

My lord, I'll swear I saw him yesternight.

Hamlet.

Saw! Who?

Horatio.

The king, your father.

Hamlet.

Much I doubt it.

Marcellus.

'Tis true, my lord.

Horatio.

I'll tell you all about it.

SONG.—HORATIO.

(Tune—" *Heigho ! says Rowley.*")

Two nights to watch these gentlemen went,

" Heigho !" says Horatio ;

When, just at the time when the night was spent,

A spectre to frighten them thither was sent ;

With his tomb-stone, jaw-bone, skull, shroud and skeleton,

" Too strange to be true," says Horatio.

The ghost like your father look'd, arm'd cap-à-pié.

" Heigho !" says Horatio ;

They came in a twitter to tell this to me,

Saying, " If you don't credit us, pray come and see.

With his tomb-stone, &c.

" A cock and a bull," says Horatio.

I promis'd with them to keep watch the next night :

" Heigho !" says Horatio ;

When lo ! as they'd told me, the ghost came in sight—

Says I, " 'Tis too plain that there's something not right.

With his tomb-stone, &c.

" But we'll soon find it out," says Horatio.

I intended to say a few words to the ghost ;

" Heigho !" says Horatio ;

(I shouldn't have kept him five minutes at most)

But I found the poor fellow as dumb as a post.

With his tomb-stone, &c.

" He's no blabber, I find," says Horatio.

He turn'd on his heel, and went off in a pet,

"Heigho!" says Horatio;

But he frown'd on us all ere away we could get,

Just as much as to say, "I've not done with you yet,"

With his tomb-stone, &c.

"We had better make off," says Horatio.

He soon came in again, so I told him my mind:

"Heigho!" says Horatio;

Says I, "I'm quite sure you've left something behind,

"Some treasure, perhaps, your executors can't find:

With his tomb-stone, &c.

"You'd best shew where 'tis hid," says Horatio.

He seem'd not to like it, and look'd rather black,

"Heigho!" says Horatio;

As much as to say, "You had best hold your clack;"

But he heard the cock crow and was off in a crack.

With his tomb-stone, &c.

"You're a rum kind of ghost," says Horatio.

Hamlet.

Perchance 'twill walk again;—I'll watch to-night,

And beg a conversation with the sprite:

If in my father's form it come to scare me,

I'll speak to it, should e'en Old Harry dare me.

(*To Hor. and Mar.*) Don't let the cat out of the bag, I prythee.

Horatio.

Never fear me.

Marcellus.

Nor me.

Hamlet.

Then I'll be with ye

Soon after supper.

Horatio.

Honour?

Hamlet.

Poz.—Adieu!

Exeunt Hor Mar. and Ber.

No doubt some dirty work, if this be true.
Would it were supper-time, this tale so wheedles,
Till then I'm sitting upon pins and needles (*f*). [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

An Apartment in POLONIUS's *House.*

Enter OPHELIA and LAERTES.

Laertes.

I've pack'd off bag and baggage. Never fail
To let me have a letter ev'ry mail—
If Dad will get it frank'd (*g*) so much the better.

Ophelia.

Do'st think I'd grudge the postage of a letter?

Laertes.

Be not too easily by Hamlet caught,
For all his swearing is not worth a groat.
He may not, like we folks of meaner station,
Take up with any trollop in the nation;
So look before you leap; depend upon it,
'Tis moonshine all, in valentine or sonnet:

He'll flirt with any wench in town, then leave her ;
 For know, that Hamlet is a gay deceiver.
 She sports her figure quite enough (take note)
 Who wears a flannel under-petticoat (*b*).

Ophelia.

I take the hint : but do not, good my brother,
 Shew me one road, and go yourself another :
 Like our good priest, who, whilst our sports retrenching,
 Himself goes nightly round the village wenching.

Laertes.

O, fear me not ; I hope you do not doubt me.—
 But I must run for't, or they'll sail without me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The Platform.

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.

Hamlet.

Jack Frost is gadding (*i*)—it is very cold.

Horatio.

Why, any fool, methinks, might that have told. (*Aside.*)

Hamlet.

What is't o'clock ?

Horatio.

Half past eleven at most.—

Marcellus.

My watch says twelve (*k*).

Horatio.

But see ! here comes the ghost !

Enter GHOST.

Hamlet.

Zounds! here's a pretty rig! (*l*) O Lord, defend us!
Prythee no more such frightful spectres send us!
Be thou a jovial sprite or goblin damn'd;
Be thou or ether-puff'd or sulphur-cramm'd;
Be thy intents indiff'rent, good, or bad,
I'll speak to thee, thou look'st so like my dad.
In a trim grave so snugly wast thou lain,
Say what the devil brought thee out again?
I like a joke myself; but 'tis not right
To come and frighten us to death at night.
Say, why is this? and straight the reason tell us,
For fright'ning me, Horatio, and Marcellus.—

Horatio.

He'd have a tête-à-tête with you—alone.

Hamlet.

Would he?—Here goes then—now, my cock, lead on!

Marcellus.

You shall not go.

Horatio.

Perhaps he means to kill you.

Hamlet.

You'd better hold your jaw (*m*),—be quiet, will you?

Horatio.

Now blow me if you go.

Hamlet.

My fate cries out
And gives me pluck—so mind what you're about.

Still am I call'd—paws off (*n*)—the time we're wasting—
Come, brush; or else I'll give you both a basting.

[*Breaking from them.*

Hop off, I say! (*To Ghost*) Lead on; I'll quickly
follow.

(*To Hor. and Mar.*) Wait here; and if I want ye, lads,
I'll hollo.

[*Exeunt Ghost and Ham.*
Hor. and Mar.

SCENE IV.

A remote Part of the Platform.

Enter GHOST and HAMLET.

Hamlet.

Hollo, you Sir! Where is't you mean to go?
I'll go no further.

Ghost.

You had better.

Hamlet.

No!

Ghost.

Then hold your gab (*o*), and hear what I've to tell;
I'm press'd for time—we keep good hours in h—ll.
Soon must I go and have another roast;
So pray attend to me.

Hamlet.

Alas, poor Ghost!

SONG.—GHOST.

(Tune—"Giles Scroggins' Ghost.")

Behold in me your father's sprite,
Ri tol tiddy tol de ray,
 Doom'd for a term to walk the night,
Tiddy, tiddy, &c.
 You'll scarce believe me when I say,
 That I'm bound to fast in fires all day,
 Till my crimes are burnt and purg'd away.
Ri tol tiddy, &c.

But that I am forbid to blow, (p)
Ri tol tiddy, &c.
 The dreadful secrets which I know,
Tiddy, tiddy, &c.
 I could such a dismal tale unfold,
 As would make your precious blood run cold!
 But, ah! those things must not be told.
Ri tol tiddy, &c.

Your father suddenly you miss'd,
Ri tol tiddy, &c.
 I'll tell you how:—List! list! O list!
Tiddy, tiddy, &c.
 'Twas given out to all the town,
 That a serpent pull'd your father down—
 But now that serpent wears his crown.
Ri tol tiddy, &c.

Your uncle is the man I mean,
Ri tol tiddy, &c.
 That diddled (q) me out of my crown and my queen.—
Tiddy, tiddy, &c.

O what a falling off was there !
But brief let me be, I must back repair,
For methinks I scent the morning air.

Ri tol tiddy, &c.

One afternoon, as was my use,

Ri tol tiddy, &c.

I went to my orchard to take a snooze ;

Tiddy, tiddy, &c.

When your uncle into my ear did pour

A bottle of cursed hellebore !—

How little did I think I should wake no more !

Ri tol tiddy, &c.

Doom'd by a brother's hand was I,

Ri tol tiddy, &c.

To lose my crown, my wife,—to die.

Tiddy, tiddy, &c.

I should like to have settled my worldly affairs,

But the rascal came on so unawares,

That I hadn't even time to say my pray'rs.

Ri tol tiddy, &c.

Torment your uncle for my sake

Ri tol tiddy, &c.

Let him never be at peace, asleep or awake.

Tiddy, tiddy, &c.

Your mother's plague let her conscience be—

But I must be off for the day-light I see.—

Adieu, adieu, adieu ! Remember me !

Ri tol tiddy, &c.

[*The Ghost vanishes.*

Hamlet.

Remember thee!—I feel in such a flurry,
Egad, I shan't forget thee in a hurry.
Remember thee! Yea, from my souvenir,
All memoranda swift shall disappear;
There thy commandment all alone I'll write;
And if I e'er forget thee—blow me tight.

Horatio (without).

My Lord!

Marcellus.

Lord Hamlet!

Hamlet.

Damn those stupid fellows.
Horatio, here am I.—Hollo, Marcellus.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Marcellus.

How is't, my Lord?—What news?—What said the Ghost?

Hamlet.

You'll blab.

Marcellus.

Not I.

Horatio.

I'm silent as a post.

Hamlet.

He said each Danish villian is a knave!

Horatio.

That all?—He might have staid then in his grave.

Hamlet.

That's as he pleases.—So good night—but ho!
I have a word to say before you go.
Never make known what you have seen to night.

Horatio.

Not I.

Marcellus.

Nor I.

Hamlet.

Swear!

Ghost (beneath).

Make 'em swear. That's right!
[*They swear.*]

Hamlet.

But that's not all: Now swear that if, perchance,
Like Merry Andrew, (*r*) I think fit to dance
And skip about the house, you'll never dare
To tell, or even hint, the reason—

Ghost (beneath).

Swear!
[*They swear again.*]

Hamlet.

Lie still, old Grey-bones.—'Tis such chilling weather,
Suppose we go and get some drink together?

Horatio.

With all my heart—Egad, I like your plan—
Marcellus, what say you, lad?

Marcellus.

I'm your man.

Hamlet.

The world's gone mad—Curs'd fate, that ever I
Was born to have a finger in the pie!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

An Apartment in POLONIUS's House.

Enter POLONIUS, meeting OPHELIA.

Polonius.

You look stark mad, Ophelia!—What's the row? (*s*)

Ophelia.

I've had a precious fright.

Polonius.

Pray tell me how.

SONG.—OPHELIA.

(Tune—"Mrs. Clarke.")

My Lord, you must know,
A few minutes ago,
In my room I was darning a stocking:
Now conceive my alarm,
When (not dreaming of harm)
I was roused by a violent knocking.

I thought 'twas Old Scratch,
 So I fasten'd the latch,
 And went on with my work as before ;
 But whilst my needle I was threading,
 Lord Hamlet popp'd his head in—
 For, d'ye mind, he kick'd open the door.

His doublet unbrac'd,
 Was slung round his waist,
 And his stockings were dirty and loose ;
 He was pale as a sheet,
 And could scarce keep his feet :—
 Thus he came in, and star'd like a goose !

He took hold of my wrist,
 And gave it a twist
 That made me to quiver and quake :
 He then began to quiz,
 As tho' he meant to draw my phiz ;
 And then gave me a terrible shake.

Next so sadly he sigh'd,
 Lord ! I thought he'd have died !
 Then he thrice up and down shook his noddle.
 After treating me so,
 He thought fit to let me go ;
 And then tow'rd's the stairs did he waddle.

'Twas a chance he didn't fall
 Over bannisters and all,
 For I vow not a step could he see ;
 To my utter surprize,
 He found his way without his eyes,—
 To the last they were bent upon me.

Polonius.

Come, go with me,—I will go seek the king :
Hamlet's behaviour is not quite the thing.
Have you of late been snappish to him, pray ?

Opbelia.

Oh, no—I never did a cross word say :
I merely sent his letters back by scores,
And when he call'd, I turn'd him out o'doors.

Polonius.

Aye ! that hath made him mad—I do not doubt it.
We'll to the king, and tell him all about it.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

The Palace.

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King.

Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern :
You have come just in time to serve our turn.
Something you've heard of Hamlet's transformation ;
But to account for his sad situation
We find impossible ; so you must pump him :
If he won't tell by fair means—why then—thump him.

Queen.

Good gentlemen, right heartily he'll greet you,
For very often hath he wish'd to meet you ;
So stay, and find out what his real state is,
And we will give you board and lodging gratis.

Rosen.

Needs must (*t*)—You'd make us tarry if we wou'dn't,
And if we rather chose to go we cou'dn't.

Guild.

We'll so behave ourselves that you shall boast of us;
Whilst we remain, I'd have you make the most of us.

King.

Thanks, lads.

Queen.

Now pray discover what this fun is.
(*To attendants*) Hollo, there! bring these jockeys where my
son is. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.

Another Room in the Palace.

Enter HAMLET.

Hamlet.

I think my plan will hit—they're caught, egad!
And all the family believe I'm mad.
Guild'stern and Rosencrantz just now they sent
To sift my secrets, but they miss'd their scent—
And old Polonius too—that sneaking prig—
But if I let them pump me, dash my wig.
Hold! something of the play'rs he said—aye—right.
I'll have them act a play this very night:
For guilty people oft (as nurses say)
Confess their sins when sitting at a play.—
They shall not act *their* tragedies; I'd rather
Have something 'bout the murder of my father:

'Twill make a charming ballet-pantomime—
We'll get it up in style,—if we have time.
The king shall come; he'll not suspect the trick;
I'll watch him close—I'll touch him to the quick:
The charge against him is, as yet, deficient,—
The honour of a ghost is not sufficient;
But if the play affect him, I shall tell, O!
That he's a knave—the ghost an honest fellow.
[*Exit Hamlet.*]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

•

HAMLET TRAVESTIE.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Chamber in the Palace.

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ,
and GUILDENSTERN.

King.

And can you, by no drift of conversation,
Smell out the cause of his sad situation?

Rosen.

He does confess himself *non compos mentis*, (a)
But won't tell what the cause or the intent is.

Guilden.

He'll not be sounded; he knows well enough
The game we're after: Zooks, he's up to snuff. (b)

Queen.

Did you not try to get him out to play?

Rosen.

It chanc'd we met the actors on the way:

•

He jump'd for joy to hear it: they're at court;
And he this night intends to have rare sport.

Polonius.

'Tis true; and Hamlet says, that if your graces
Will come to see the play, he'll book you places.

King.

With all my heart: right glad am I to find
That he to some amusement is inclin'd.
Pray, gentlemen, give him a further zest
For sports like these.

Rosen.

My Lord, we'll do our best.
[*Exeunt* Guild. and Rosen.]

King.

Sweet Gertrude, march your carcase: we have sent
For Hamlet, that (as 'twere by accident)
He here may meet Ophelia.—Thro' the key-hole
Polonius and myself will hear and see th' whole;
And from his conduct we shall soon discover
If Hamlet's be the madness of a lover.

Queen.

Ophelia, were he mad of love for you,
I think we'd cure him soon.

Ophelia.

I think so too.

[*Exit* Queen.]

Polonius.

(*To Ophelia*) Here, take this book ; he'll think you're at
your pray'rs.

(*To the King*) Come, let's be off ; I hear him on the stairs.
[*Exeunt King and Polonius.*]

Enter HAMLET.

SONG.—HAMLET.

(Tune—" *Here we go up, up, up.*")

When a man becomes tir'd of his life,
The question is, "to be, or not to be?"
For before he dare finish the strife,
His reflections most serious ought to be.
When his troubles too numerous grow,
And he knows of no method to mend them,
Had he best bear them tamely, or no?
Or by stoutly opposing them end them?
Ri tol de rol, &c.

To die is to sleep—nothing more—
And by sleeping to say we end sorrow,
And pain, and ten thousand things more—
O, I wish it were my turn to-morrow!
But, perchance, in that sleep we may dream,
For we dream in our beds very often—
Now, however capricious 't may seem,
I've no notions of dreams in a coffin.
Ri tol de rol, &c.

'Tis the doubt of our ending all snugly
 That makes us with life thus dispute ;
 Or who'd bear with a wife old and ugly,
 Or the length of a chancery suit ?
 Or who would bear fardels, and take
 Kicks, cuffs, frowns, and many an odd thing,
 When he might his own quietus make,
 And end all his cares with a bodkin ?

Ri tol de rol, &c.

Truly, death is a fine thing to talk of,
 But I'll leave it to men of more learning ;
 For my own part, I've no wish to walk off,
 For I find there's no chance of returning.—
 After all, 'tis the pleasanter way,
 To bear up as we can 'gainst our sorrow :
 So if things go not easy to-day,
 Let us hope they'll go better to-morrow.

Ri tol de rol, &c.

Hamlet.

Oh, ho ! Ophelia here. I'll shew my airs.—(*Aside.*)
 Think of my pranks, Ophelia, in your pray'rs.

Ophelia.

I hope you're well, my Lord. (*Aside.*) I fear he'll bite (*c*).

Hamlet.

Methinks I'm something better, though not quite.

Ophelia.

I've got your present here ; I'll now return it,
Tho' oft I've had an itching, Sir, to burn it :
Pray take it back.

Hamlet.

What is't you mean ?

Ophelia.

The pair
Of worsted garters from the Easter fair.
You know you gave them, and with words bewitching,
Last week when I was frying in the kitchen.
I've left them ever since upon the shelf,
In hopes you'd come and put them on yourself ;
But since you did not, they're not worth a penny :
So take them back.

Hamlet.

I never gave you any.

SONG.—HAMLET.

(Tune—" *Mr. Mag.* ")

Let me tell you, Miss Ophelia, your behaviour's very rude,
And your whims and freaks and fancies ought in time to be
subdu'd ;
So if my advice will better you, to give it 'tis my duty :—
Imprimis :—let your honesty discourse not with your beauty.

Won't you, won't you, won't you to a nunnery go ?

I told you once I lov'd you ; but 'twas easy to perceive
 That I didn't care a fig for you, as now you will believe.
 In future, trust to none of us ; we're arrant knaves at best ;
 And I (as soon you'll find) am no better than the rest.

Won't you, won't you, &c.

If you marry, (just to comfort you,) this plague take for
 portion,
 That calumny will twig you, tho' you act with greatest caution :
 But get some fool to marry you, if disengag'd your heart is ;
 I shall not tell the reason—but 'twere better for both parties.

Won't you, won't you, &c.

I've lately been inform'd that you paint both red and white ;
 Heav'n gave you one face, and to make another is not right.
 Your pranks have made me mad—Marriage bells no more
 shall jingle—

The married may remain so, but the rest shall all keep single.

Won't you, won't you, &c.

[*Exit* Hamlet.]

Opbelia.

O, what a pity such a charming lad
 Should, at his time of life, go roaring mad !
 He says he loves me not—I'll call him in again,
 And his affections try to win again.

RECITATIVE (*accompanied,*) and DUETT (*d.*).

HAMLET and OPHELIA.

RECITATIVE.

*Ophelia.*Dear Hamlet, pray come back. (*Enter Hamlet.*) I'm your's for ever.*Hamlet.*

And shall we never part, love ?

(Together.)

Ah ! no, never !

DUETT.

*(Tune—"I've kiss'd and I've prattled.")**Hamlet.*

I've made love to fifty young women in Denmark,

And chang'd them as oft, d'ye see :

But if she would promise to love me—why, then mark—

Ophelia's the maid for me.

Ophelia.

I've kiss'd and I've prattled with fifty young fellows,

And chang'd them as oft, d'ye see :

But if he would not be so devilish jealous,

Young Hamlet's the lad for me.

Hamlet.

Your father, I know, doesn't much like the match ;

But we in our choice will be free :

I'm a prince—and he ought to be glad of the catch,

For Ophelia's the maid for me.

Ophelia.

We know very well that advice cheap as dirt is,
And plenty I've had, d'ye see :
But in spite of the lessons of brother Laertes,
Young Hamlet's the lad for me.

Hamlet and Ophelia.

Then here be an end to our squabbles and strife
And happy for ever we'll be.

Ham. And as no other woman shall e'er be my wife,

Oph. And as no other man shall e'er make me his wife,

Ham. Ophelia's the maid for me.

Oph. Young Hamlet's the lad for me.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Theatre in the Palace.

Enter HAMLET and the FIRST ACTOR.

SONG.—HAMLET.

(Tune—" *Liberty-Hall.*")

Tho' a talent for acting must nature impart,
'Tis refin'd and improv'd by the lessons of art ;
So I'll teach you the rules my experience affords,
As I once had an itching myself for the boards.

Tol de rol, &c.

When speaking a speech, it an actor becomes
To mumble as tho' he'd his mouth full of plums,
For mouthing's a *sine qua non* : if you doubt it,
Pray say what were W—— or M—— without it ?

Tol de rol, &c.

All actors should study what folks call *the graces*—
 That's the twist of their legs, and the set of their faces :
 But for gracefully using their *arms* my advice is,
 They, like C——, saw the air, as it were, into slices.
Tol de rol, &c.

Some will tell you, "be calm;" but, in spite of their cant,
 And their critical jargon, strut, bellow, and rant:
 To bamboozle the flats and to keep them from snoring,
 R—— proves that there's nothing like ranting and roaring.
Tol de rol, &c.

But in speeches which, teeming with passion, require
 All an E——'s spirit, a K——'s own fire,
 If you'd hope H—— S—— to equal in fame,
 You, like him, must be lifeless, insipid, and tame.
Tol de rol, &c.

Some critics assert (but I stoutly dispute it),
 That each word stands in need of an action to suit it :—
 Their principle's false ;—and, if fairly they'll try it,
 C——, C——, and twenty besides, will deny it.
Tol de rol, &c.

Like M—— or D——, when playing the clown,
 Always garnish the author's with wit of your own :
 And tho' knowing ones hiss ; yet the god's approbation,
 In a horse-laugh, will greet you.—So ends my oration.
Tol de rol, &c.

[*Exit* First Actor.]

Enter HORATIO.

Hamlet.

Horatio, is that you? I'm glad to meet you.

Horatio.

My honour'd lord, most proud am I to greet you.

Hamlet.

Horatio, you're as tight a lad, I say,
As one may meet with in a summer's day. (*e*)

Horatio.

Come, that won't do, my lord: — now that's all gam-
mon. (*f*)

He's throwing out a sprat to catch a salmon.

[*Aside.*

Hamlet.

Sir, if you think it gammon, you mistake me;
For if I gammon you, the devil take me:
You know I cannot hope to gain a louse
From you, who are as poor as a church-mouse.
No, let him cringe who hopes to mend his gains;
I should but get my labour for my pains.
Since I could tell a dray-horse from a poney, (*g*)
I've fix'd on you, Horatio, for my croney:
You're ne'er down-hearted; fortune's freaks you smother,
And when she slaps one cheek, you hold up t'other.
Give me the man that stands all sorts of weather,
And we shall soon be hand and glove together.

Something too much of this.—

Horatio.

Pray what's the reason

Your lordship sent for me?

Hamlet.

To smoke out treason.

You must with me in a good joke unite :

We have pic-nic theatricals to-night :

A pantomimic ballet I intend

To represent my dad's untimely end.

To do't in style I've made great preparations—

New music, scenery, dresses, decorations.—

I've just sent tickets to the King and Queen—

Now watch my uncle in the murder-scene—

I'll bet a wager he'll convict himself ;

If not, this spectre is a lying elf,

And I have all this time been drunk or dreaming.

However, let us closely note his seeming.

Horatio.

My lord, we will.

[*Flourish of Trumpets and Drums.*]

Hamlet.

This trumpeting and drumming

Give notice that the King and Queen are coming.

To keep the joke up I must idle be ;

Go to your place, and keep a seat for me.

A GRAND MARCH.

Enter POLONIUS, KING, QUEEN, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ,
GUILDENSTERN, OSRICK, MARCELLUS, BERNARDO, GENTLE-
MEN, *and* LADIES.

King.

How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Hamlet.

Tightly, tightly ;
I eat the air :—You can't feed pigs so lightly.

King.

Pooh ! — Nonsense Sir ! — Such words I don't acknow-
ledge.

Hamlet.

(*To* Pol.) You told me, Sir, you acted once at col-
lege.

Polonius.

I acted Cæsar—Brutus laid me lower.

Hamlet.

A brute, indeed, to kill so great a bore !

Queen.

Come, sit by me, dear Hamlet, whilst they're acting.

Hamlet.

I'd rather not ; here's metal more attracting.
(*To* Ophelia) Ophelia, may I lie upon your knees ?

Ophelia.

O, surely ; or wherever else you please.

Hamlet.

Look at mamma—She's grinning, by the pow'rs,
And father died within the last two hours!—

Ophelia.

Two months.

Hamlet.

So long? Nay then I'll turn the tables;
The deuce take black; I'll have a suit of sables.

Ophelia.

Pray, what's the play, my Lord?

Hamlet.

I've ne'er a bill;
I cannot tell;—but that rum jockey will.

THE CURTAIN RISES.

Enter 2d Actor as Prologue.

*For us, and for our pantomime,
We beg you'll give us grace and time (b).*

[*Exit.*

THE PANTOMIME (*i*).SCENE.—*A garden.*

Enter Duke and Duchess—They embrace—Vow eternal love and constancy—Duke suddenly taken ill—Duchess alarmed—Shrieks—Enter a Page—Exit—and return with a bottle and glass—Duchess fills the glass for Duke, whilst she herself receives consolation from the bottle—Duke intimates that he feels his end fast approaching—Duchess strikes her forehead, clasps her hands, &c. &c.—(*the usual pantomime signs of distress*)—Vows never to survive him—at least, to live single ever after—Duke shakes his head in a manner as expressive as possible of the monosyllable “fudge”—Duchess points to the ceiling, (*the pantomime mode of swearing*), and exhibits ‘a scroll thus inscribed :

“No second husband will I take,
 “When I have lost my first,
 “I swear : and if my vow I break,
 “Why, then—may I be curs’d.”

They embrace—Duke gently reclines his head over his right shoulder, and meets it with the palm of his right hand (*pantomime for “sleepy”*)—Duchess takes the hint—Reaches a chair—Duke seats himself—Sleeps—Snores—Duchess points to the Duke—Presses her heart—Points to the ceiling—and exit.

Hamlet.

(*To Queen.*) Like you the play?

Queen.

Indeed, I must confess,

The lady vows too much.

Hamlet.

She means no less.

King.

I hope the actors no offence intend.

Hamlet.

You'll find they are but jesting in the end.
There's no offence: the story, please your grace,
A murder done in some outlandish place.
O, 'twas a scurvy trick; but that all nonsense is
To you and I, my Lord, who have clear consciences:
I never did a murder—*I* can bear it;
But if the cap fit *you*, why, you may wear it.
But let's be quiet—See, they're coming in.—
Now, murd'rer, damn your faces, and begin.

The pantomime continued.

Enter Duke's nephew—Listens whether the Duke is asleep—Takes a bottle from his pocket—Attempts in vain to draw the cork—Exit—
And return with a corkscrew and a funnel—Draws the cork—Puts the funnel to Duke's ear—Pours the contents of the bottle into it—A noise—Exit in haste.

Hamlet.

Is not the case of the poor Duke a hard one?
For his estate he's poison'd in his garden.

You'll see anon the murd'rer weds his widow ;—
'Twas his own nephew who the murder did.

King.

Oh !

*King faints, and is carried off—Followed by Queen, Polonius,
Ophelia, &c. &c.*

[Manent Hamlet and Horatio.]

SONG.—HAMLET.

Oh dear what can the matter be !

Dear, dear, what can the matter be !

O dear, what can the matter be !

Did you see how he fainted away ?

To condemn any man on slight grounds I'm not willing ;

But in future I'll take the ghost's word for a shilling :—

Did you notice the king when it came to the killing ?—

And now, friend, I wish you good day.

[Exit Horatio.]

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Rosen.

My Lord, I have a message.

Hamlet.

Well, what is it ?

Rosen.

The Queen desires you'll pay her soon a visit.

Hamlet.

I'll come anon.—But stay—upon my life,

I'll have you play a tune upon this fife.

Rosen.

My Lord, I can't.

Hamlet.

I know you can.

Rosen.

I could play once, but now I'm out of practice. The fact is,

Hamlet.

Come, Sir, then you shall play. (*To Guild.*)

Guild.

My Lord, I would,
But I can't play at all, nor ever could.

Hamlet.

Why, look ye, what a nincompoop you'd make me.
Zounds, Sirs, for what the devil do you take me?
Not play on this, and yet sound me! Od's life,
D'ye think I'm easier play'd on than a fife?
I'm not the booby you may think—March! fly!—
And tell my mother I'll come by and by.
[*Exeunt Rosen. and Guild.*]

SONG.—HAMLET.

(Tune—"Hey randy dandy O.")

'Tis now the very time of night,
Hey randy dandy O!
When ghosts to stalk about delight,
With their galloping randy dandy O!

'Tis now the time when church-yards yawn,
 Hey randy dandy O !
 And let their tenants out till morn,
 With their gallopping randy dandy O !

For a precious row I'm just in cue ;
 Hey randy dandy O !
 Some mischief I should like to do,
 With my gallopping randy dandy O !

But first I'll to my mother go,
 Hey randy dandy O !
 And what is what I'll soon let her know,
 With my gallopping randy dandy O !
[Exit Hamlet.

SCENE III.

The Queen's Closet.

Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.

Polonius.

He'll soon be here :—then let him have his whack :
 Tell him he'll bring a house upon his back ;
 Tell him his pranks may get him soon a kicking,
 And that your grace has sav'd him many a licking.
 I'll go and hide myself behind the curtain.
 Now mind your eye—

Queen.

I'll tip it him for certain.

[Polonius *conceals himself behind the arras.*

Enter HAMLET.

Hamlet.

Well, mother, what's the matter with you now?

Queen.

Your father, Sir, has made a pretty row (*k*).

Hamlet.

Mother, you've put my father in a passion.

Queen.

Zounds, Sir, don't answer in this idle fashion.

Hamlet.

None of your blarney; it won't do to-night—

Queen.

Have you forgot me, puppy?

Hamlet.

No, not quite:

You are the Queen—wife to your husband's brother;
And (tho' I blush to own you) you're my mother.

Queen.

Behave yourself;—be decent, Sir, I beg.

Hamlet.

Sit down,—and dam'me if you stir a peg
'Till I have let you see your very soul.—

Queen.

What! Wouldst thou kill me? Help, ho! Watch!—

Polonius.

(*Behind.*)

Patrole!

Hamlet.

A rat,—a rat,—by Jove, that's just the thing ;—
He's dead as sure as two-pence.
(*Hamlet draws, and stabs Polonius behind the arras.*)
Is't the King ?

Queen.

O, Hamlet ! you have done a deed felonious ;—
You've kill'd our poor lord-chamberlain, Polonius !

Hamlet.

They who throw stones should mind *their* windows,
mother.—
Who kill'd a king and married with his brother ?

Queen.

If I know what you mean, the devil burn me.

Hamlet.

(*Lifts up the arras and sees Polonius.*)
Thou'st paid for list'ning to what don't concern thee.
(*To Queen.*) Leave wringing of your hands ; before we
part,
I'll take the liberty to wring your heart.

Queen.

What have I done that you dare make so free,
As thus to blow me up, and bully me ?

Hamlet.

Oh ! such an act—it scarcely can be nam'd—
So bad—I wonder you're not more asham'd.
Jump o'er a broomstick (*l*), but don't make a farce on
The marriage ceremonies of the parson.

Queen.

What act d'you mean?—You hoax—there's nothing in it.

Hamlet.

I'll let you know my meaning in a minute.

SONG.—HAMLET.

(Tune—"Drops of Brandy.")

Come sit you down here, ma'am, a little,
 And I'll shew you two counterfeit faces;
 They're done from the life to a tittle—
 Come, none of your fine airs and graces.
 Look on this first: the likeness you well know,—
 Like a ploughman so plump and so chubby;
 A good-looking, fine, strapping, fellow;—
 Now, madam, this once was your hubby.
Ri tol, &c.

You'll now please to look upon this:
 I'd have married a monkey as soon—
 An old, ugly, undersiz'd, quiz—
 Zounds! the fellow looks like a baboon!
 How could you take *this*—and forego
 The one I now hold in my hand, mother?
 You can't say 'twas for love; for you know
 That you're almost as old as my grandmother.
Ri tol, &c.

Queen.

O, say no more—I'll mind what I'm about :
Your words have almost turn'd me inside out.

Hamlet.

Nay, but to live, (in not the best repute,)
With that inhuman, cruel, murd'rous, brute ;
A very FILCH, that more deserves to hang
Than any one of the light-fingered gang ;
That from a shelf the precious crown did thieve,
And put it in his pocket—without leave :
A King of shreds and patches—(*Enter Ghost.*) Ha ! here's
dad !
What is't you're come about ?

Queen.

Alas ! he's mad !

TRIO.—HAMLET, GHOST, QUEEN.

(Tune—" *O, Lady Fair.*")

Hamlet—O, spectre grim ! What brings thee here now ?
Thou com'st thy tardy son to chide, I fear now.
I own thy commission, as yet, is not quite done ;
Don't be in a hurry, and all shall be right done.
Ghost—Thee of thy promise I come to remind, Sir :—
(*Bass*) A nod's like a wink to a horse that is blind, Sir.

Queen — Say, Hamlet, say, on what art thou staring ;
 So frightened am I, that I vow 'tis past bearing.
 On what art thou looking ? To whom art thou
 talking ?

I can see nothing ! O, where art thou walking ?

Ghost — But look at thy mother ; she seems in a stew, Sir ;
 Tell her she'd better not be frighten'd—pray do, Sir !

Hamlet—Whom 'tis I look at, fain you'd be knowing :
 Straight thro' the trap-door now he is going.

Queen — Whom 'tis you look at, fain I'd be knowing :—
 Who thro' the trap-door now is going ?

Ghost — Whom 'tis you look at, fain she'd be knowing :
 Straight thro' the trap-door now I'm going.

Together.

[*Ghost sinks.*]

Queen.

Hamlet, these pranks of your's do much amaze me ;
 You surely must be either drunk or crazy.

Hamlet.

Mother, I fear your crimes are past all cure ;
 But I am no more mad nor drunk than you are.
 So don't humbug yourself ; I'm not in liquor.—
 Confess your sins this instant to the vicar ;
 Repent what's past, and don't do so again—

Queen.

O, Hamlet, you have cut my heart in twain.

Hamlet.

Then throw away the rotten part, good mother,
 And strive to make a better use of t'other.
 Good night ; and, when you next lay down your head,
 Be sure you kick my uncle out of bed :

For tho' at best you're no great things—'twere right
To keep appearance up.—Once more, good night.

[*Exit Queen.*]

I must be staunch with her—I dare not falter :
And thus we whip a thief, to save him from the halter.

[*Exit Hamlet.*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

HAMLET TRAVESTIE.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Palace.

Enter KING and QUEEN.

King.

Explain these sighs ; 'tis fit we share the fun :
How's Hamlet ?

Queen.

Mad as butter in the sun : (a)
Hearing a noise, "a rat, a rat," he roar'd,
And in his crazy fit whipp'd out his sword,
And ran Polonius thro' behind the curtain.

King.

Had we been there, he'd have spik'd us for certain.
Soon as 'tis day-light he shall buy a brush ;
And this unlucky job we'll try to hush.
Ho ! Guildenstern ! (*Enter GUILD. and ROSEN.*) Just now
hath Hamlet slain,
By way of joke, our poor lord-chamberlain.—

The body to the bone-house take ;—seek out
And bring lord Hamlet here.—Come, jump about.
[*Exeunt* Guild. and Rosen.]

We'll now prepare to pack him off to London :—
As for Polonius—what's done can't be undone.
[*Exit* Queen.]

If Hamlet thus go loose he'll make a racket,
And yet we dare not give him a straight jacket ;
Because tag, rag and bob-tail love him dearly—
And right from wrong they can't distinguish clearly.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN *with* HAMLET.

King.

Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius ?

Hamlet.

He's in heaven ;
But if you think that I'm to lying giv'n,
Send there to see ; if there your man don't nick him,
E'en to the devil go yourself and seek him.
If in a month you find not where he's closeted,
Your nose will hint i'th' dust-hole he's deposited.

King.

Go seek him there ; I fear he's only humming.
[*Exit* Guild.]

Hamlet.

Pray don't fatigue yourself ; he'll wait your coming.

King.

From pure regard for thee, this cursed blunder
Must send thee, Hamlet, hence.

Hamlet.

I shou'dn't wonder !

King.

Therefore for England instantly prepare ;
The packet's ready and the wind is fair.

Hamlet.

Good.

King.

So you'd say if you our reasons knew,

Hamlet.

There's one above sees all—But come ; adieu !
[*Exit* Hamlet and Rosen.]

King.

Now, England, if thou car'st for us a button,
Thou'll sweetly tickle this young jockey's mutton. (b)
[*Exit* King.]

SCENE II.

Another Room in the Palace.

Enter QUEEN and HORATIO.

Queen.

I will not speak with her.

Horatio.

She'll breed a riot;
You'd better have her in to keep her quiet.

Queen.

Well, send her up. (*Exit Hor.*) I think the devil's
in it,
That I can never be alone a minute.

Enter HORATIO with OPHELIA.

Ophelia (sings).

Three children sliding on the ice,
All on a summer's day,
The ice it broke—they all fell in—
The rest—they ran away.

Queen.

Sweet lady, what's the meaning of this song?

Ophelia.

I'll sing the rest—for 'tis not very long.

(*Sings.*)

Now had these children staid at home,
And slid upon dry ground,
They broken necks had had, perchance,
But never had been drown'd.

Enter KING.

King.

How is't, Ophelia?

Ophelia.

Where's the use of sorrow?
For, ah! we're gone to-day and here to-morrow!

SONG.—OPHELIA.

(Tune—"How happy could I be with either.")

'Tis the fashion for lads to court lasses,
But I know a case quite contrary:
Peggy Tomkins (*c*) lov'd Johnny the butler,
And she whistled for John down the area.
Ri tol, &c.

King.

Pretty Ophelia.

Ophelia.

Aye, 'tis true, depend on't;
And so, without an oath, I'll make an end on't.

(*Sings.*)

Says John "go to the back-kitchen window,
And quickly I'll come and unbar it."
But, to shorten a very long story,
Peggy staid all night long in John's garret.

Ri tol, &c.

King.

How long hath she been thus?

Queen.

I cannot tell.

Ophelia.

We must be patient; all may yet be well.
Yet I must weep—to lay him in the dirt is
A dirty trick—I'll tell it to Laertes.
I thank you—so 'tis best—you counsel right—
My coach — three thirty-five (*d*) — good night, good
night.

[*Exit Ophelia.*

King.

Follow her close: Horatio, you be at her;
See you look sharp. (*Exit Hor.*) Hollo, there! what's
the matter?

[*Noise without.*

Enter MARCELLUS.

Marcellus.

My lord, my lord, Laertes heads a mob,
And comes to knock about your royal nob:

The rabble swear your majesty shall swing,
And loudly cry, "Laertes shall be king."

[*Exit Marcellus.*

[*Noise without.*

Enter LAERTES.

Laertes.

You blackguard! (*To the King.*)

Queen.

Fie! Laertes.

Laertes.

You'd mind your business. (*To King*) I had rather
Give me back
my father.

King.

Hold him fast, Gertrude, I'll get out o' th' way;
He's twice as big as I am. (*Going.*)

Laertes.

Stop, I say!

Who kill'd my father?

King.

How should I know?

Laertes.

Nonsense.

Queen.

He did not kill him.

King.

No, upon my conscience.

I'll prove my innocence beyond all doubt.

Laertes.

None of your blarney, (e)—but I'll soon find out.
I'll twig ye all for't—I'll not stand your humming—

Enter HORATIO.

Horatio.

Here's Miss Ophelia, Sir.

King.

Pray let her come in.

Enter OPHELIA, fantastically dressed with straws and flowers, her clothes splashed with mud and dirt.

Laertes.

My pretty maid—This is too much to bear!
By Gemini she's mad as a March hare!

Ophelia. (Sings.)

Giles Scroggins courted Molly Brown,

Ri tol, &c.

The fairest wench in all the town.

Tiddy, tiddy, &c.

Laertes.

To see her thus—O, 'tis a doleful pity!

Ophelia.

What must be, must—but hush!—I'll end my ditty.

(Sings.)

A captain bold in Halifax,
 Who liv'd in country quarters,
 Seduc'd a maid who hang'd herself,
 One morning, in her garters.

Stop—stop—I've brought some fruit:—for you, sweet
 Queen,
 The finest cabbage that was ever seen;
 For you a bunch of carrots; and for you
 A turnip—and I'll eat a turnip too.
 To bring a rope of onions, (*f*) too, I tried,
 But father ate them all before he died.
 Well, there's an end of him!—he's gone!—aye, true—
 Come, one song more, and then—then I'll go too.

SONG.—OPHELIA.

And will he not come again?
 And will he not come again?
 He is knock'd o' the head,
 And than mutton more dead,
 And never will come again.

His beard was as white as my shift,
 As white as my shift was his pole:
 He is gone—let's be jolly,
 For grieving's a folly,
 And never will save his soul.

[*Exeunt Ophelia and Queen.*]

King.

Laertes, I lament your situation :
But come ; we'll have a private conversation,
And I'll acquaint you who 'twas kill'd your father.—
Or, if you like not this plan, and had rather
Submit our diff'rence to an arbiration,
You may depend on ample reparation.

Laertes.

His shabby fun'ral too—O sad reproach !
Not e'en attended by a morning-coach ;
No mutes, no pall-bearers, and (what's still worse)
Two wretched knock'd-up hacks to draw his hearse.
I'll have revenge.

King.

You shall.—Tip us your daddle :
But on the right horse see you place the saddle.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Another Room in the Palace.

Enter KING and LAERTES.

King.

And now, my cock of wax, I've prov'd that I
Have never had a finger in the pie.
Thinking to murder me, did Hamlet kill him.

Laertes.

O, let me catch him, and I'll sweetly mill him (g).

King.

That may you speedily.—E'en now I've learn'd,
Hamlet hath unexpectedly return'd.
Now, I've a scheme will suit us to a T ;
'Twill keep suspicion too from you and me :
To his long home he quickly shall be sent,
And so, as it shall seem, by accident.

Laertes.

I will be rul'd by you ; but plan it so,
That *I* may tip the rascal his death-blow.

King.

'Tis rumour'd you're a famous pugilist ;—
Now, Hamlet oft hath long'd to try your fist :—
I'll have you box together for a wager !

Laertes.

To give him a sound drubbing I'll engage, Sir :
Depend upon't, who's who I'll let him know.

King.

Contrive to give him an unlucky blow.—
But, to make sure of him, (should this plan fail,)
I'll put some ars'nic in a mug of ale ;
And when he's hot and thirsty with the fight,
I'll give it him to drink—What think you ?

Laertes.

Right !

Enter QUEEN.

Queen.

Misfortunes ne'er come singly, oft I've found ;
Now here's a pretty rig—Ophelia's drown'd.

SONG.—QUEEN.

(Tune—"Our Polly is a sad slut.")

Ophelia is a sad slut!
In spite of all I'd taught her,
She went to fish for tittlebats,
And fell into the water.
An envious bramble near the ditch
Fast by the ankle caught her,
And sous'd her over head and heels,
Slap-dash into the water.

Laertes.

Oh! I've a speech of fire; but, like a spout,
My tears do play upon't, and put it out!

[*Exit.*

King.

I've had enough ado to keep him quiet,
And now will he kick up another riot.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

*A Church-Yard.*GRAVEDIGGER *discovered digging a Grave.*

SONG.—GRAVEDIGGER.

(Tune—"Black Foke.")

O, long life to the sons of the pick-axe and spade,
 For they hold up an antient respectable trade ;
With my dig, dig, pick-axe and spade.

In the hist'ry of all early states 'twill be found,
 That each half-naked nobleman dug his own ground ;—
 For *antiquity*, all trades to delving must give in,
 Since by digging e'en Adam himself earn'd his living.
With my dig, dig, pick-axe and spade.

Whilst the GRAVEDIGGER is singing this Verse,
 HAMLET and HORATIO *enter at a distance.*

Hamlet.

This fellow digs and sings —unfeeling knave !
 He's making merry of a trade that's *grave*.

Horatio.

Use, Sir, is second nature.

Hamlet.

On reflection,
 I think I'd do the same were I a sexton.

Gravedigger (sings).

The carpenter, shipwright, and mason, may boast
Of the strength of their buildings—they're nut-shells at most :
With my dig, dig, &c.

But the sexton builds stronger than all put together,
For the houses that *he* makes defy wind and weather ;
And his tenants lie snug, undisturb'd, and content,
For they're ne'er teased for taxes, nor troubled for rent.
With my dig, dig, &c.

[Gravedigger *throws up several skulls.*

Hamlet.

That skull might once have been a politician's ;
And that a lawyer's, or a grave physician's.
Law, politics, and physic, now must grovel,
To bear a basting with a dirty shovel !—
That sexton seems a dev'lish dry old elf :
Horatio, shall we quiz him ?

Horatio.

Please yourself.

Hamlet.

(*To Gravedigger*) Do'st know whose skull was this
amongst the many ?

Gravedigger.

What ! can't you tell ?

Hamlet.

Why, how the devil can I ?

Gravedigger.

Of all good fellows sure he was the best, Sir !
This skull was Yorick's once, the late king's jester.

Hamlet.

Alas, poor Yorick !—Sir, I knew him well—O !
He was indeed a jolly roaring fellow.
Horatio, he would get dead drunk,—and after
Could keep the table in a roar of laughter ;
The first and last was he in ev'ry row :
O' th' wrong side of his mouth he's laughing now.
Now, when Miss Prim is seated at her glass,
With paints and washes to bedaub her face,
Tell her, (to make her giggle at her toilette,)
That, paint her face inch thick, yet death will spoil it.

SONG.—HAMLET.

(Tune—"Dorothy Dumps.")

When depriv'd of our breath,
By that harlequin, Death,
His pantomime-changes fast follow :
First his magic displaces
Eyes and nose from our faces,
And like this leaves them ghastly and hollow.

'Tis to him the same thing,
Whether beggar or king,—
'Midst his frolics all share the same fate ;
And certain it is,
To a thing just like this,
He transform'd Alexander the Great.

Next, without much delay,
 We're converted to clay;
 But our next transformation's a lott'ry:
 Some are chang'd into cans,
 Some to pint-pots or pans—
 Some to tea-pots from Wedgewood's fam'd pott'ry!

By this rule may we trace
 Julius Cæsar's bold face,
 'Till we find it i' th' form of a jug;
 And renown'd Alexander,
 The world's great commander,
 A two-penny earthenware mug!!

Bell tolls.

Hamlet.

But mum! here come King, Queen, and all the
 court:
 Let's stand aside awhile and see the sport.

[Bell tolls.]

*Enter FRIAR, KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, MARCELLUS,
 BERNARDO, GENTLEMEN, and LADIES, following the
 corpse of OPHELIA.*

Laertes.

Must there no more be done?

Friar.

Steady, lad, steady;
 Don't talk of more—we've done too much already.

Laertes.

In with her then: (*The coffin is put into the grave*) and
 if, as gossips tell,
 Old maids are destin'd to lead apes in hell,
 May'st thou be one in my poor sister's train.

Hamlet.

What, my old sweetheart! We're bewitch'd, 'tis
 plain (*b*).

Queen.

(*Scattering flowers*) Instead of this, as I'm a living
 sinner,
 I thought t'have had soon a good wedding-dinner.
 [*The Gravedigger about to throw
 the earth into the grave.*]

DUETT.—LAERTES AND HAMLET.

(Tune—"Nancy Dawson.")

Laertes.

Sexton, throw aside your spade,
 Don't be in so much haste, my blade;
 Once more I'll buss the bonny maid,
 Before the grave you fill, Sir.
 [*Leaps into the grave.*]

Now cover up the quick and dead,
 And pile your dust upon my head,
 'Till of this flat a mount you've made
 As high as Greenwich-hill, Sir.

HAMLET TRAVESTIE.

Hamlet (advancing).

Who's ranting in so fine a strain?

Laertes.

Pray, who are you?

Hamlet.

Hamlet, the Dane.

Laertes.

I'm glad I've caught you here again—

Now dam'me but I'll choak thee.

*[Springs out of the grave, and catches
Hamlet by the throat.]**Hamlet.*

Let go my throat—don't squeeze so tight;

For, tho' I'm not the first to fight,

I'll thump you to your heart's delight,—

So you'd better not provoke me.

I'll fight for her (so hold your mag)

Until my eye-lids cease to wag;

But if you only mean to brag,

Come tell me what you'll do, Sir?

Of paltry *Greenwich-hill* you speak,

But on me I'll let them pile a heap

That shall rival the Devil's A—e a-peak—

I'll rant as well as you, Sir.

*[Exeunt Hamlet and Horatio.]**Queen.*

Alas, he's crack'd! Awhile he'll growl like Towzer (*i*):
 Anon, he's patient as a hungry mouser (*k*).

King.

Good Gertrude, see your crazy son you make fast.

[*Exit* Queen.]

And now, Laertes, we'll go home to breakfast.

[*Exeunt* King, Laertes, &c. &c.]

SCENE V.

A Hall in the Palace.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.

Hamlet.

Horatio, I am sorry for this squabble ;
I fear 'twill get me in a precious hobble.

Enter OSRICK.

Osrick.

(*To* Hamlet) His Majesty hath made a match for you,
Sir,

To spar with young Laertes—a prime bruiser ;—
And betted him ten shillings to a crown
That you, my lord, will give the first knock down.
Laertes is quite ready to set to ;
They're all assembled, and but wait for you.

Hamlet.

Lead on : I'll fight him, Sir : I ne'er felt bolder.

Horatio.

I'll be your second.

Osrick.

I, your bottle-holder.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

*The Court of Denmark.**Flourish of trumpets and drums.*

KING and QUEEN seated — LAERTES, OSRICK, MARCELLUS,
BERNARDO, GENTLEMEN, and LADIES, discovered.

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.**King.*

To put an end to squabble, strife, and noise,
Shake hands and make it up, my jolly boys.
[To Hamlet and Laertes.

Hamlet.

(To Laertes) Sir, I have done you wrong, and sorely
rue it,
But, on my word, I didn't go to do it ;
Therefore, let's make it up ;—come, don't be hard on—

Laertes.

Enough ; no man can do more than beg pardon.—
We're friends.—

Hamlet.

With all my heart. Come, let's set to.
Bring me the gloves—

Laertes.

And bring me a pair too.

King.

Hamlet, you know the wager.

Hamlet.

Aye, my Lord ;
You've back'd the worser man tho', on my word.

King.

I'm not afraid ; I'm sure you'll not fight shy ;
If you don't win, I know at least you'll try.

Laertes.

These gloves are much too tight—another pair—

Hamlet.

Mine fit.—Are his as soft as mine ?

Osrick.

All's fair.

King.

If i' th' two first rounds Hamlet hit most blows,
Or 'scape the third without a bloody nose,
Let all the guns we've got make the discovery ;—
The King shall drink to Hamlet's quick recovery ;
And in the beer this nutmeg shall he pound,
The largest that in Denmark could be found.—
Give me the mug : now drum a loud tattoo ;
The drum shall tell the trumpet what to do ;
The trumpet's tantarara, post, (2) shall set off,
And tell the cannoneer the guns to let off ;
The cannoneer shall fire 'em, and then—stop—
I think I've said enough—I'll drink a drop.

Here's Hamlet's health ! (*Drums, trumpets, and cannon*)
Come, now begin the bout ;
And you, the judges, keep a sharp look-out.

HAMLET *and* LAERTES *spar.*

Hamlet.

A hit.—

Laertes.

No hit.

Osrick.

A hit, I'll bet a crown.

Hamlet.

A hit or not, 't has almost knock'd him down.

[*Drums, trumpets, and cannon.*]

King.

Give me the beer : this nutmeg is for you.

Hamlet, your health (*Puis poison into the drink.*
pretends to drink). You'd better
drink some too.

Hamlet.

Let's have this round ; when I want drink I'll ask it.

(*They spar again.*)

Egad, I had him there in the bread-basket (*m*).

Queen.

Hamlet, your health ! (*drinks.*) Ha ! this is famous stingo !

King.

Don't drink.

Queen.

I have.

King.

The poison'd cup, by jingo !
[*Aside.*

Laertes.

I'll nab him ;—but it goes against my conscience.
[*Aside.*

Hamlet.

Laertes, you're afraid to hit.

Laertes.

Pooh ! nonsense.

*They spar again—in the scuffle, they exchange gloves—
Hamlet knocks Laertes down.—The Queen swoons.*

Osrick.

Look to the Queen. (*To Laertes*) How is't, my lord ?

Laertes.

I'm dish'd (*n*) ;
I'm caught as neatly as I could have wish'd.

Hamlet.

How does the Queen ?

King.

To see your bloody noses,
Her stomach-royal slightly indisposes.

Queen.

No, no ; I'm poison'd : your damn'd uncle, here,
Has mix'd a deadly poison with the beer.—
'Tis now too late—I've had a precious swig—
If I'm not a dead woman—dash my wig (o).

[*Dies.*

Hamlet.

O, treachery ! I'll smoke it, on my oath.

Laertes.

O, Hamlet ! 'tis all dickey with us both (p) !
I promis'd to die game ; but I'll expose
That dirty scamp ; for you am I a Nose (q) :
You've done my business by a blow, 'tis true ;
But I—Oh ! I—have done the same for you.
You're mother's poison'd ;—dying, here I lie—
The King's to blame—

Hamlet.

Die, damn'd old murd'rer, die.
[*Kills the King.*

Laertes.

You've serv'd him right. Hamlet, let's square accounts—
Tho' there's some little difference in amounts—

Mine, and my father's death, 'gainst your's be rek-
kon'd—

Now then, I'm off.—

[*Dies.*

Hamlet.

I'll follow in a second.—

You that look pale, and quiver, quirk, and quake,
And scarce know what of this sad scene to make—
O, I could tell—for there's a great deal in it—
I'm dead,—(r) at least, I shall be in a minute—
But promise me, before I wish good night,
Horatio, that you'll tell my story right.

Horatio.

No, I'll die too—here's poison in the cup—
I'll play the Roman, and I'll drink it up.

Hamlet.

Give me the cup; you shall not have a drop—
For here you must a little longer stop.
If e'er you loved me—live—my tale to tell—
And then—I care not if you go—to h—ll.—
That last cross-buttock dish'd me—Oh!—I can't get
on—
Here goes, Horatio,—(s) going—(s) going—(s)
gone.

[*Dies.*

Horatio.

Well, here's a noble fellow gone to pot!
This altogether's been a pretty plot!

To see dead bodies strew'd about like cattle,
Were better suited to the field of battle
Charon, in safety, o'er the Styx will ferry 'em ;
And all that we can do now, is—to bury 'em.
[*A dead march.*
[*The curtain falls.*

THE END OF HAMLET TRAVESTIE.

BURLESQUE
ANNOTATIONS

UPON

Hamlet Travestie ;

AFTER THE MANNER OF

DR. JOHNSON,

AND

GEORGE STEEVENS, ESQ.

AND THE VARIOUS

COMMENTATORS.

— Commentators each dark passage shun,
And hold their farthing candle to the sun.

YOUNG.

BURLESQUE
ANNOTATIONS

UPON

HAMLET TRAVESTIE;

AFTER THE MANNER OF

DR. JOHNSON, GEORGE STEEVENS AND OTHERS.

By JOHN POOLE, Esq.



REPRINTED FOR PRIVATE DISTRIBUTION.

ANNOTATIONS.

ACT THE FIRST.

(a)——*My eye and Tommy.*

THIS is rather an obscure phrase. I suspect the author wrote *My own to me*, and that the passage originally stood thus :

*But I have that without you can't take from me,
As my black clothes are all my own to me.*

The whole passage, which before was unintelligible, is, by this *slight* alteration, rendered perfectly clear ; and may be thus explained :—‘ You may disapprove of my outward appearance, but you cannot compel me to alter it, having no controul over that which I wear *without* ; *as my black clothes are all my own to me*,—*i. e.* my own personal property—not borrowed from the

royal ward-robe, but made expressly for me, and at my own expense.'

WARBURTON.

Here is an elaborate display of ingenuity without accuracy. He that will wantonly sacrifice the sense of his author to a supererogatory refinement, may gain the admiration of the unlearned, and excite the wonder of the ignorant; but of obtaining the praise of the illuminated, and the approbation of the erudite, let him despair.

My eye and Tommy (*i. e. fudge*) is the true reading; and the passage, as it stands, is correct.

JOHNSON.

In the *Ryghte Tragycall Hystorie of Master Thomas Thumbe*, bl. let. no date, I find, "'Tis all my eye and *Betty Martin*" used in the same sense. If the substitution of "*Tommy*" for "*Betty Martin*" be allowed, Dr. Johnson's explanation is just.

STEEVENS.

(b)—*Cheer up*—

From what follows (*No more foul weather*), it occurs

to me that our author intended a perfect and very beautiful metaphor from the weather, which the present reading has totally destroyed: if, instead of *cheer up*, we read *clear up*, it will be restored.

MALONE.

I was for some time of Mr. Malone's opinion; but a serious reconsideration of the arguments upon which it was founded, has convinced me of its fallacy. *Cheer up* is so frequently used by the King, as to leave but little doubt of its being one of his Danish Majesty's cant phrases.

STEEVENS.

(c)—*My dear, take my Belcher*—

I question whether *Belchers* were known in Denmark as early as the time of Hamlet. This is an evident anachronism.

JOHNSON.

In a very old bl. let. *Detaillie of y^e Workes of y, Looome*, I find mention of "BELLE-CHERE, a *Kerchief* (so called, because of ytts Beautie and of ytts Dearnesse) *used only by Folke of Degree.*" With greater propriety

might Dr. Johnson have doubted the existence of *Umbrellas* in Denmark.

STEEVENS.

(d)—*No quizzing*—

From the verb “to quiz,” *i. e.* to make game. Respecting the derivation of this verb, our best etymologists are undecided; and so am I.

JOHNSON.

(e)—*Cheer*—

The folio reads *chear*.

POPE.

Mr. Pope is, I think, incorrect. I have consulted, not only all the folios, but also all the quartos, octavos, and duodecimos, extant, and find that they concur in reading *cheer*. As I consider this a point of too much importance to be left in uncertainty, I have been the more careful in my examination of it.

STEEVENS.

(f)—*I'm sitting upon pins and needles*—

I suppose that *corking*-pins are here intended. I once had a very strong reason for this supposition; but it has unfortunately escaped my memory.

THEOBALD.

The ingenious Mr. Theobald is wrong in his conjecture. If a distinction was at all intended, it was certainly in favour of *blanket-pins*. In the catalogue of the curious and valuable collection of Lord ———, at ———, article 19,375, is “an antique bronze representing the Genius of Irritability seated upon *blanket-pins* ;” to which it is probable our author is indebted for his forcible figure, *till then I’m sitting upon pins and needles*.

STEEVENS.

The caprice of conjecture, puerile and impertinent, can only be vanquished by the overwhelming force of fact. Weak, frivolous, and imbecile, I shall dismiss Mr. Theobald without a comment: the puissant lion, exulting in his prowess, and secure in his strength, ranges the desert regardless of the innocuous mouse. Unfortunately for the suggestion of Mr. Steevens, the collection of Lord ——— was not formed until long after the death of our poet. As a mere illustration of the passage, it may be sufficient to remark, “that sitting upon pins and needles” is to this day used, in the more elegant and the graver sort of compositions, as an expression of impatience.

JOHNSON.

(g)—*If dad will get it frank'd—*

An ingenious friend has suggested to me, that for *get it frank'd* we should read *frank it*. Polonius, it must be remembered, was a privy-counsellor, and consequently enjoyed the privilege of franking *ex officio*.

POPE.

Notwithstanding the plausibility of this suggestion, the present reading may be the right one. In a “Tretys offe Frauncynge,” bl. let. 1589, Syr Edouarde Gulle is noticed as “destraynt offe hys Fraunckes for divers unduetyfulle Libertys ynne y^e useage thereoffe.” pp. 1342-3. As it happened in the time of our author, may not this be a satirical allusion to the circumstance?

STEEVENS.

(b)—*A flannel under-petticoat—*

In this last admonition of Laertes to Ophelia, our author doubtless intends a sarcasm on a practice very prevalent in his time, but which has long since become obsolete: I mean the omission of the petticoat as an article of female habiliment. Something similar occurs in a MS. entitled, “Brytchet her Goolden Rules,” deposited in the —— Museum, dated 1506.—“Albeit I graunte y^e Kyrteel thyn and slyte ys myghtelie favourynge toe a faunciefulle dysplaye offe y^r fayre shapis,

nonne y^e more wo^d ytte bee hydden bie y^e onder Gaur-
mente offe Flaunnyn, and then wds^t thou haue where-
withall toe deffend thie Lymbes from y^e rothlesse Ayr :
moreouer thou wds^t profyt therebie ynne divers Waies.”

STEEVENS.

(i)—*Jack Frost*—

An elegant prosopopœia of cold.

WARBURTON.

Jack Frost is, I believe, a very powerful agent in the Scandinavian mythology.—He is a personage of no little importance in many of the traditionary stories of the north.

MALONE.

(k)—*My watch says twelve*—

Horatio says, 'tis *half past eleven at most*. That Marcellus's watch indigitates the time more accurately than Horatio's, is proved by the appearance of the ghost; as it is well known that ghosts are never disincarcerated until midnight.

For a man to wear a *good* watch, although there be neither a moral obligation nor a physical necessity,—yet he who, disdaining the equivocating offspring of Geneva, carries one whose motions are regulated with

rigid scrupulosity, and whose information is delivered with oracular veracity, deserves praise, and merits commendation.

JOHNSON.

There is so surprising a display of intellect in this observation, that I shall forbear to question the truth of the position.

STEEVENS.

(l)- *Rig*—

A row ; a kick-up.

STEEVENS.

Rig is not, strictly, a row, but rather a *go* ; in which sense it is used in another part of this play.

JOHNSON.

(m) *You'd better bold your jaw*—

The folio reads *mag* ; but I adopt *jaw* (from the quarto) as the more elegant, and as being more in the spirit of our author.

STEEVENS.

(n)—*Paws off*—

Poeticè,—hands off.

WARBURTON.

(o)—*Gab*—

i. e. Mag, or jaw. See the "*Slang Dictionary*." St. Giles's Edition.

JOHNSON.

(p)—*To blow*—

This word, powerful and expressive, has several significations: its present meaning is to *turn nose*, to *divulge*.

JOHNSON.

(q) *That* diddled *me*—

The true reading I believe to be, "*that did me*." To *do* a person is to *cheat* him.

POPE.

Diddled is correct. To *do* and to *diddle* mean the same.

JOHNSON.

(r)—*Merry Andrew*—

My friend, the glazier, is of opinion that Merry Andrew was a distant relation of Maid Marian's gentleman-usher, or, as I conceive him to have been, her pa-

ramour ;* but a reference to the registers of the Heralds' College, places it beyond all doubt that he was the person represented by the figure which I mistook for Tom the Piper, in my friend's painted window.

If the public are not yet surfeited with the remarks of myself and the other *ingenious* commentators on the Old Vice, Maid Marian, the Morris Dancers, &c. &c. &c. I shall republish them in thirteen volumes quarto, with additional observations on Merry Andrew, Little Jack Horner, and the whole of the *dramatis personæ* of the Nursery mythology.

STEEVENS.

(s)—*What's the row?*

I have ventured to restore this from the old copies : in the later ones I find, *what now?*

STEEVENS.

(t) *Needs must*—

The remainder of this old proverb is preserved in the

* See Mr. Tollet's *Essay on Fools' Caps*, or, as he very gravely calls it, his *Opinion concerning the Morris-Dancers upon his Window*.—
ANNOTATIONS, HEN. IV. PART I.

pathetic ballad of the "*Two Louers theyr melancolie Partyngē*"—Dr. Humbug's Reliques, Vol. 94 :

"To leve thee here, mie Alys dere,
 "Fulle sone y^e tyme arryveth ;
 "Drie uppe yat tere, mie Alys dere,
 "Needs must when the Devil dryveth."

Rosencrantz means thus: 'We (Guildenstern and myself) have no alternative; were we to refuse attendance upon your mere invitation, you could then compel it by the interposition of the royal authority.'

MALONE.

ANNOTATIONS.

ACT THE SECOND.

(a)—*Non compos mentis.*

THE scraps of Latin, which we find scattered throughout our author's works, do not, in my opinion, furnish us with any substantial proof of his acquaintance with the learned languages : for it is certain that Ben Jonson, with whom he was once upon terms of the closest intimacy, not only furnished him with all the Latin he required, but even translated into English such Latin passages as accidentally came in his way. This is incontrovertibly proved by the following anecdote :—

“ Our poet was god-father to one of Ben Jonson's children ; and, after the christening, being in deep study, Jonson came to cheer him up, and asked him

“why he was so melancholy?—‘No ’faith, Ben,’
 “says he, ‘not I; but I have been considering a great
 “while what should be the fittest gift for me to bestow
 “upon my god-child, and I have resolved at last,’—‘I
 “pr’ythee what?’ says he. ‘I’faith, Ben, I’ll give him
 “some *Latin spondees*, AND THOU SHALT TRANS-
 “LATE THEM.”

The circumstance of his desiring Jonson to *translate the Latin spondees* is conclusive as to his want of learning, and requires no comment.

FARMER.

In support of his favorite hypothesis, Dr. Farmer has produced an anecdote, but (no doubt unintentionally) with an egregious mistake. The fact is, that the gift was not *some Latin spondees*, but a *dozen good latten spoons*; it being the custom for *sponsors* at christenings to present *spoons* to the child: whence the appellation. Nothing more was intended than a quibble, or pun: ‘I cannot,’ says our poet, ‘give them of silver; but I will give him a dozen *spoons* of good *latten* (*tinned iron so called*); and (alluding to Jonson’s latinity) *thou shalt translate them, i. e.* thou shalt turn them into silver.’ So much for Dr. Farmer’s “incontrovertible proof.”

STEEVENS.

(b)—*He's up to snuff.*

This is highly figurative. To *snuff up* is to *scent*. Guildenstern says,

“————— he knows well enough

“The *game we're after* : 'Zooks, *he's up to snuff*:'”

that is, he has got scent of the game we are in pursuit of. The metaphor, which is striking and apposite, is borrowed from the Chase.

WARBURTON.

Without having recourse to a far-fetched explanation, I choose to understand the passage in its common acceptation: *The game we're after* means nothing more than the trick by which we are endeavouring to worm from him his secret; but which, *as he is up to snuff*, i. e. as he is a knowing one, he will, assuredly, render inefficacious.

JOHNSON.

(c)—*I fear he'll bite.*

The late abrupt visit of Hamlet to Ophelia was certainly sufficient to impress her with an idea of his madness, powerful and terrific; but whether there was any physical cause for her apprehension of a dentifrical

attack, is not very evident. During the exauctoration of the mental powers, a *dog* will *bite*; a cat will claw and expectorate; a bull, with an impulsion of its head, sudden and violent, will commit the miserable victim of its fury, to the air; but man, destitute of their weapons, or, possessing them, impotent and ineffective, would do neither; prudently resorting to the arms with which nature has furnished him, his attack would be either manual or pedestrious.

JOHNSON.

This opinion of Dr. Johnson is sanctioned by the authority of one of our later poets:

“To *kick* is *human*, but to *bite*, *canine*.”

STEEVENS.

(*d*)—RECITATIVE (*accompanied*) and DUETT.

This, and all that follows to the end of the scene, is, in almost all the old copies, (for what reason I know not,) omitted. By restoring it, I remove the languor under which, destitute of a pathetic love-scene, the play has hitherto laboured.

JOHNSON.

(e) *As one may meet with in a summer's day.*

This is surely no flattering compliment to Horatio : it is branding him, in unequivocal language, with the opprobrious appellation of a *fair-weather* friend. Our author meant, and I have no doubt wrote, “in a *sombre* day ;” a dark, dreary day.

THEOBALD.

I cannot assent to Mr. Theobald's emendation. A *summer's* day is correct, and is here opposed to a day in winter, not as it is *fairer*, but as it is *longer*. The poet's meaning is, ‘You are as tight a lad as one may meet with, amongst the vast number of men that it is likely one may encounter, in the course of a *summer-day's journey*, when the days are at their extreme length, and reckoning from sun-rise to sun-set.’

WARBURTON.

(f)—*That's all gammon.*

It is probable that the author intended *game, man!* By *game* may be understood *fudge*, or *blarney*. When we recollect that many of our author's plays were taken down in writing during the performance, and consider

that the copyists may have been misled by the indistinct articulation of the actors, the error may be easily accounted for.

POPE.

The passage, as it stands, is correct, and, to me, appears perfectly intelligible: *that's all gammon* is equivalent to 'that's all my eye.'

Mr. Pope, not readily understanding the passage, seems willing to plunge it still deeper into an abyss of unintelligibility: like him who, deprived of the organs of vision, excludes the light from his chamber, and immerses it in impenetrable tenebrosity, in order that his visitors may partake of, and be involved in, that obscurity, under which he himself is doomed to suffer.

JOHNSON.

(g) *Since I could tell a dray-horse from a poney.*

By this passage we are enabled to form a tolerably accurate idea of the time of the commencement of Hamlet's intimacy with Horatio. Children of a very early age are acquainted with objects only in the *general*: to them, the stallion, the gelding, and the mare, the racer, the dray-horse, and the hack, are known only by the general term of *horse*; it is through the medium

of experience that they learn to distinguish and arrange *particulars*. Hence it appears, that Hamlet chose Horatio as his friend, when about six years of age—when experience had taught him to “tell a dray-horse from a poney.”

WARBURTON.

(b) *We beg you'll give us grace and time.*

For us, *grace*, or *indulgence*; for our pantomime, the *time* requisite for its performance.

This exquisite prologue stands unrivalled. Unlike similar compositions of our own times, it neither fatigues by a dull and formal prolixity, nor disgusts by a reiteration of hopes, and doubts, and fears, frivolous and unavailing: laconic and forcible, it demands nothing but that which it is entitled to claim,—time and attention; wisely considering that a good play can have no foundation more secure than its own merit, and that a whining prologue cannot prejudice a judicious audience in favour of a bad one, whatever is servile or impertinent it properly rejects. Like the Apollo of the Vatican, let this prologue be revered as the master-piece of its art; whose beauties the meanest artist may imitate, but the most exalted dare not hope to equal.

JOHNSON.

This prologue is a very close imitation of the celebrated prologue to *Gonzago and Baptista*, which, even in the hands of our author, has been improved in no respect but in brevity :

“ For us, and for our Tragedie,
 “ Here, stopeyng to your clemencie,
 “ We beg your hereyng patientlie.”

STEEVENS.

(i)—THE PANTOMIME.

Some of the later editions have it, “ The *Melo-Drama* ;” but it is evidently an alteration of some modern editor, emanating from incogitancy. The *melo-drama*, which was neither tragedy, nor comedy, nor opera, nor farce, nor pantomime, but a barbarous and an unnatural combination of all, was unknown in the time of our poet : the climax of theatrical licentiousness, it remained to be introduced in the reign of ———, when our stage had arrived at a state the most abject and degraded. We, who live in an age when the theatre is dignified and adorned by a K—— and a S——, with a copious range of drama for the display of their exalted talents, have but little cause to fear the re-admission of this monstrous abortion of dramatic libertinism ;

that it would be tolerated by an audience, sensible and judicious, it were absurd to suppose.

JOHNSON.

(*k*)—*Row*—

A breeze ; a kick-up.

JOHNSON.

I find this word used, in the same sense, in an old ballad, (which, no doubt, was within our author's knowledge,) called *Molle in y^e Wadde*. bl. let. 1564 :

“Molle in y^e Wadde and I felle outte,
 “And what doe you thinke it was aboutte ?
 “She wanted monnei—I had nonne,
 “And that's y^e waie y^e row begun.” [began]

STEEVENS.

(*l*) *Jump o'er a broomstick*—

We might, with more propriety, read *mop-stick* ; but, as I do not approve of alterations unsupported by authority, or of emendations, captious and arbitrary, I leave the text as I found it.

JOHNSON.

Broomstick is certainly right. The allusion is to an antient custom noticed in *Quiz'em's Chronicles*, printed by Stephen Type, at the Sign of the Catte and Fiddelle, London, 1598, bl. let. and entered in the books of the Stationers' Company, November 1598.

“—— And y^e Bryde and y^e Brydegroome, not
“handyely fyndeing a Parson, and being in grievous
“hayst to bee wed ; they did take a *Broome-stycke*, and
“they did jumpe from one syde of y^e *Broome-stycke* over
“to y^e other syde thereof ; and haveing so done, they
“did thinke them lawfuller Man and Wyffe.”

STEEVENS.

ANNOTATIONS.

ACT THE THIRD.

(a)——*Mad as butter in the sun.*

AMONGST the popular superstitions is one, that butter is mad twice a year; viz. in summer, when its liquability renders it tenable only in a spoon; and, in winter, when, no longer intenerate, by its inflexible viscosity, it obstinately resists the knife.

JOHNSON.

(b) *Thou'lt sweetly tickle this young Jockey's mutton.*

The quarto reads, and, I think, properly, *pickle*.

POPE.

I have restored *tickle* from the folio. In rejecting *pickle*, I am supported by the context: for, who ever heard of *pickled* MUTTON? As a further proof, if (in support of a point established in reason, and beyond the reach of controversy) further proof be necessary, let me produce the adverbial epithet *sweetly*; for that which is pickled is never *sweet*, as the distinguishing property of a pickle is its power of extimulating on the palate a sensation of *acidity*.

To tickle one's mutton is a popular expression; and means, to punish by flagellation.

JOHNSON.

Dr. Johnson *may be* right: for in no one of the numerous Works upon Cookery, either antient or modern, which I have referred to, do I find the slightest mention of *pickled mutton*.

My inquiries into this important subject, though equally diligent in the prosecution, have been less successful in the result, than my investigation of that *more delicate topic*—STEWED PRUNES; which, I flatter myself, I have (in another place*) so fully, and so satisfactorily, discussed, as to set all further question upon the matter at rest.

STEEVENS.

* See Note upon "*stewed prunes*," HEN. IV. Part I.

(c)—*Peggy Tomkins*—

Some of the modern editions read *Peggy Perkins*: but as the change was, most likely, unauthorised, and made merely for the sake of the alliteration, I follow the old copies.

STEEVENS.

(d) *My coach—three thirty-five—*

This is an exquisite touch of nature. Ophelia is now wavering between sense and insanity: she calls, first, for *one* coach; and then for *three hundred and thirty-five* coaches.

WARBURTON.

This I allow to be an exquisite touch of nature: but, by the illustration which the Right Reverend has attempted, its force is obstructed, and its beauty obscured. *Three thirty-five* is, evidently, the *number* of the HACKNEY-COACH which brought Ophelia to the palace. Here the poet has given an instance of his unbounded knowledge of human nature. In a short

interval of lucidity Ophelia calls for her coach; and then, regardless of the presence of the "Majesty of Denmark," she calls for it by its *number*, 335. This is madness pathetic and interesting: had she, as Dr. Warburton erroneously supposes, called for *three hundred and thirty-five coaches*, it would have been a representation of madness too terrific for exhibition on the stage. Madness is agreeable only until it becomes outrageous.

JOHNSON.

(e)—*Blarney*—

A word of doubtful etymology, synonymous with *gammon*.

JOHNSON.

Again :

"None of your *blarney*; it won't do to-night."

Act II. Scene III.

STEEVENS.

(f)—Rope of onions—

I do not understand this. May we not, with greater propriety, read, a *robe* of onions? *i. e.* a fantastical garment ornamented with onions, in the same way as the dominos of masqueraders are sometimes studded with gingerbread-nuts—a dress such as Ophelia's phrensy might naturally suggest to her.

POPE.

Rope is, undoubtedly, the true reading. *A rope of onions* is a certain number of onions, which, for the convenience of portability, are, by the market-women, suspended from a *rope*: not, as the Oxford editor ingeniously, but improperly, supposes, in a bunch at the end, but by a perpendicular arrangement.

For the hints afforded me in the formation of this note, and for those contained in the note upon *pickled mutton*, I am indebted to a lady celebrated at once for her literary acquirements and her culinary accomplishments.

JOHNSON.

To bring a rope of onions, &c.

Let us suppose that Ophelia addresses this to the king, and we shall discover a peculiar propriety in its applica-

tion. The king is represented as an intemperate drinker—Ophelia, who, doubtless has some skill in uroscopy, applies this speech to the king, with reference to the diuertic quality of onions.—*Verbum sapienti.*

Should the concise manner in which I treat this subject expose me to the charge either of fastidious brevity or of delicacy of expression squeamishly refined, I trust that my celebrated note upon potatoes* (wherein I have so *clearly* and so *minutely* explained the various qualities of that invaluable plant) will be received in refutation, and that it will convince the world that I want neither talent nor inclination to indulge in prurient description.

COLLINS.

(g)—*Mill him.*

To mill is to whack, or to thump. See the *Slang Dictionary*, St. Giles's Edition.

JOHNSON.

The *Billingsgate* edition of the *Slang Dictionary*, which, in point of accuracy, I conceive to be the least exceptionable, explains it, *to knuckle*, or, *to lather*.

STEEVENS.

* See note upon "*potatoes*," and the *useful* and *entertaining* extract from GERARD'S *Herbal*. *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA*, Act IV.

(b)—*We're bewitch'd, 'tis plain.*

Hamlet's meaning appears to me to be this : ' I know not how to account for the succession of calamities which has befallen us, otherwise than by supposing that we labour under the malevolent influence of witchcraft.'

JOHNSON.

(i)—*Towzer.*

Probably the name of the royal watch-dog.

JOHNSON.

(k) *Anon he's patient as a hungry mouser.*

This passage is incorrect. I cannot believe that *patience* is characteristic of a *hungry* animal.

POPE.

The difficulty of this passage will be solved by supplying an apostrophe, which, doubtless, was intended to mark the elision of the *a* in *hungry* ; and by substituting a capital H for a small one.

We must understand *a Hungary* (for *Hungarian*) mouser.

WARBURTON.

This emendation is so ingenious that I am sorry it is not just : for the passage, in its present state is not only correct, but eminently beautiful. The Queen compares the patience of Hamlet to that which, after a long privation from food, is exhibited by a mouser whilst watching for its prey.

JOHNSON.

There is yet a beauty which Dr. Johnson has passed without notice. The Queen not only *compares* Hamlet's occasional patience to that of a hungry mouser, but, at the same time, *contrasts* it with his paroxysms of ferocity, resembling the growlings of a watch-dog : whence it is common to say of two persons who live discordantly, that "they agree like cat and dog."

It may not be altogether uninteresting to the curious reader, to know that a *mouser* is a *cat* which is trained up for the purpose of killing RATS as well as *mice*. So in Chaucer's *Romaunt de la rose*, ver. 6204 :

"—————Gibbe, our *cat*,
'That waiteth *mice* and RATS to killen."

STEEVENS.

(1) *The trumpet's tantarara, post, shall set off—*

Either this passage is in itself a nonsensical rhapsody, or, partly through the caprice and partly through the negligence of successive editors, it has been corrupted. By substituting a hyphen for the comma, between *tantarara* and *post*, we obtain a faint glimmering of its meaning; and even then it remains to discover what is meant by a *tantarara-post*.

THEOBALD.

The punctuation of this passage requires no alteration. *Tantarara* is a word imitative of the note of the trumpet, as *tattoo* is of the beat of the drum. *The trumpet's tantarara, post, shall set off*, means the tantarara of the trumpet shall set off after (*post*) the loud tattoo of the drum.

WARBURTON.

Dr. Warburton has very far exceeded Mr. Theobald in his approaches towards the sense of this difficult passage; yet he has not quite hit the mark. Our poet, doubtless, intended, *the trumpet's tantarara, post* (i. e. post-haste), *shall set off*, which is more poetical and much finer than it is rendered by Dr. Warburton's common-place explanation of *post*.

STEEVENS.

Sir John Hawkins is of opinion that tân-tâ-râ-râ is not exactly imitative of the note of the trumpet, which is tân-tâ-râ-râ-râ; but Dr. Burney assures me that it was not until about the middle of the seventeenth century that this innovation in trumpetology was known, when it was introduced by one Hans Von Puffenblowenschwartz, trumpeter to the gallant Prince Rupert. Of this our author could not possibly have had any knowledge.

JOHNSON.

(m)—*Bread-basket.*

This is poetical. Hamlet strikes Laertes in the *stomach*: the stomach being the depository for food (the *pantry*, as it were, of the human frame), it is metaphorically termed the *bread-basket*.

WARBURTON.

(n)—*I'm dish'd—*

In culinary language, “to be dished” is to be *served up*: but, by a *licentia poetica*, “I’m dish’d” is here used for I’m *served out*.

WARBURTON.

So in another part of this play :

“That last cross-buttock *dish'd* me.”

MALONE.

(o)—*Dash my wig.*

If I might hazard a conjecture upon this, I should suppose that the Queen of Denmark wore a wig.

POPE.

Saxo-Grammaticus, Olaus Wormius, and all the old Danish writers, concur in stating that the Queen of Denmark wore a wig. As to its *colour* they are all silent; but they are at considerable variance respecting its *shape*: for, whilst some declare it to have been a *Brutus*, others as confidently assert that it was a *Perruque à la Greque*. I have consulted one hundred and fourteen controversial tracts, (bl. let.) expressly upon the subject, and am still at a loss which side of the question to espouse. I shall, however, resume the inquiry, and communicate the result of my laborious researches to the literary world.

STEEVENS.

Whether the Queen of Denmark wore a *Brutus* or a *Perruque à la Greque* is a question which, at this distance of time, to determine were difficult, and which, if determined, would tend only to the gratification of

an idle and impertinent curiosity ; while the time bestowed upon the inquiry might be more usefully, more advantageously, and more beneficially, employed in improving the wigs which are worn by co-temporaneous heads, or in anticipating improvements for those which may be, hereafter, displayed on the heads of posterity.

JOHNSON.

(*p*)—’Tis all Dickey *with us both*.

The meaning of this is, the game is up with us ; or, we have gone the length of our tether.

JOHNSON.

So in an old ballad called *Gabriel Gubbins hys Lamentation*, bl. let. 1602 :

“ No more Larke I trowe,
 “ ’Tis all Dyckye nowe,
 “ For I shall bee hangyt for coynynge.”

STEEVENS.

(q) *I promised to die game ; but I'll expose
That dirty scamp ; for you am I a nose.*

Nose, or *nosey*, is a term of reproach applied to one who impeaches his comrades for an offence, in the commission of which he has been concerned.

POPE.

This speech is deservedly celebrated for its admirable pathos. Laertes, at the point of death, feels his former friendship for Hamlet returning upon him, in its fullest force: '*I promised*,' says he, '*to die game* ; but, though I have forfeited my honour, *by exposing that dirty scamp*, (*the king*), do not you, Hamlet, despise me for my baseness ; consider, it is for your sake that I am forsworn—*for you am I a nose*.' Who, that has a heart alive to the soft touch of sensibility, can read this tender address without emotion ?—"For you am I a nose." How elegantly refined ! how exquisitely pathetic !

WARBURTON.

This is a noble emendation, which almost sets the critic on a level with the author.

JOHNSON.

(r) *I'm dead—at least I shall be in a minute.*

Thus the folio. The quarto reads,

I'm dead at *last—or* shall be in a minute.

POPE.

We might, without much violence, read and point thus :

I'm dead : at *rest* I shall be in a minute.

By *at rest* is meant *buried*.

WARBURTON.

What authority Dr. Warburton has for this alteration I know not : and I am equally ignorant of his reasons for so unequivocally asserting, that *at rest* means *buried*. Surely, when once the principle of vitality has quitted his frame, a man is as much at rest *above* ground as *under*. So feebly is he armed, that, in the present instance, I consider the reverend critic as an unequal adversary, and, therefore, scorn to meet him within the lists of controversy. Impotency demands our pity ; but, when it affects Herculean muscularity, it but provokes

our contempt. We disdain to punish, but we are bound to expose. Were the proposed reading admitted, we should make Hamlet positively announce his own death, and afterwards advert to his own funeral. But of this too much.

JOHNSON.

(s s s) — — — — —

To a literary friend of mine I am indebted for the following very acute observation: "Throughout this "play," says he, "there is nothing more beautiful than "these dashes: by their gradual elongation, they dis-
"tinctly mark the balbucination and the increasing
"difficulty of utterance observable in a dying man." To which let me add, that, although dashes are in frequent use with our tragic poets, yet are they seldom introduced with so good an effect as in the present instance.

JOHNSON.

THE END.

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